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A new species of *Chaerilus* Simon, 1877 from Pakistan (Scorpiones: Chaerilidae)

ERIC YTHIER (1, *) & WILSON R. LOURENÇO (2)

(1) BYG Taxa, 382 rue des Guillates, 71570 Romanèche-Thorins, France.
– E-mail : contact@bygtaxa.com
– ZooBank : ZooBank: https://zoobank.org/06FD0852-A88E-49E5-B8E6-E1494B86C4E1 – Orcid : https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3194-5184

(2) Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Sorbonne Universités, Institut de Systématique, Evolution, Biodiversité (ISYEB), UMR7205-CNRS, MNHN, UPMC, EPHE, CP 53, 57 rue Cuvier, 75005 Paris, France.
– E-mail : wilson.lourenco@mnhn.fr
– ZooBank : https://zoobank.org/58448BD6-79D7-46CE-AFDD-91EFF2B7D4EF – Orcid : https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2386-363X

* Corresponding author.

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Abstract. – A new species belonging to the genus *Chaerilus* Simon, 1877 is described from northern Pakistan. The new species is morphologically compared with the geographically closest species occurring in northern Pakistan, northern India and Nepal. This new taxon represents the 60th described species among the currently recognized species for the genus *Chaerilus*.

Ythier E. & Lourenço W. R., 2025. – A new species of *Chaerilus* Simon, 1877 from Pakistan (Scorpiones: Chaerilidae). *Faunitaxys*, 13(27): 1 – 6.

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Introduction

As previously discussed (Lourenço & Ythier, 2024), the genus *Chaerilus* was originally created to accommodate *Chaerilus variegatus* Simon, 1877, a species described from Java. Subsequently, several other species have been described from quite many countries ranging from India to China and Southeast Asia. In contrast, species reported from Pakistan remained rare, with only one species, *Chaerilus lehtrarensis* Khatoon, 1999, described from the north of Punjab province, northern Pakistan. This species has unfortunately been poorly described and so currently considered a *nomen dubium* (Kathoon, 1999; Kovařík, 2013).

In the present contribution we describe a new species of *Chaerilus*, on the basis of one pre-adult female specimen collected in the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province in northern Pakistan. The new species is compared with the geographically closest *Chaerilus* species, namely *Chaerilus lehtrarensis* Khatoon, 1999 (*nomen dubium*) from northern Pakistan, *C. insignis* Pocock 1894 from northern India, *C. truncatus* Karsch, 1879 from northern India and Nepal, and *C. annapurna* Lourenço & Duhem, 2010 from Nepal. Our decision to describe the new species based on a pre-adult specimen is based on the fact that the locality of the specimen (Pakistan) is uncommon for the genus *Chaerilus*, which appear to be the occidental known limit of distribution of this genus. Moreover, the characters used to define the new species show very poor or even no variability between pre-adult and adult females. If subsequently adults may be collected, a complement of information will be possible.

Material and methods

Illustrations were made with the aid of a Wild M5 stereo-microscope with a drawing tube (camera lucida). Measurements were made using a Motic SMZ-171 stereo-microscope with an ocular micrometer. Habitus photographs were made with a Canon EOS RP and Adobe Photoshop software. Presented photographs are not modified except for cropping and addition of white background. Map was made using Google Maps and Adobe Photoshop software. Measurements follow Stahnke (1970) and are given in mm. Cheliceral nomenclature follows Vachon (1963) while trichobothrial notations are those of Vachon (1974) and morphological terminology mostly follows Hjelle (1990). Type material is deposited in the collections of the MNHN (Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle), Paris, France.

Taxonomic treatment

Family **Chaerilidae** Pocock 1893

Genus ***Chaerilus*** Simon 1877

***Chaerilus pakistanus* sp. n.**

(Fig. 1-8)

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Holotype, pre-adult ♀, Pakistan, Jabori region, ~2250 m a.s.l., 10/VIII/1986 (W. Heint). Type material deposited in the collections of the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris, France. "Azad Kashmir" is also mentioned on the label: it is probably a mistake or an approximation since the city of Jabori,

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Gérard Dupré (*France*) - ZooBank : https://zoobank.org/B3DFB480-9253-4C7C-80EC-FCD7310DFD78

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although close from Azad Kashmir territory (about 17 km from frontier, with several other cities between) is located in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province.

Etymology. – The specific name makes reference to the country, Pakistan, where the new species was found.

Diagnosis. – Species of small to moderate size in relation to others in the genus with an estimated adult size between 29-31 mm for the female (see morphometric values section); male unknown. General coloration (pre-adult specimen in alcohol) yellowish to brownish yellow, weakly marked with brownish infuscations. Carapace narrowed toward the anterior edge; almost acarinate and weakly granulated; anterior margin slightly concave; median eyes anterior to the centre of the carapace with distance ratio from anterior and posterior margins of carapace 1:1.81. Metasomal segments I-III wider than long; IV-V longer than wide; all carinae moderately to strongly granular; ventral carinae absent from segment I (others well developed), weakly marked on segment II; dorsal and latero-dorsal carinae with spinoid granules on segments I-IV. Telson with a pear-like shape; aculeus weakly curved; presence of an inconspicuous subaculear protuberance. Fixed and movable fingers longer than manus, with 9 and 10 rows of granules on dentate margins, respectively. Pectinal tooth count 5-5 in female. Genital operculum plates with a sub-oval shape. Trichobothriotaxy of type B, orthobothriotaxic; trichobothrium d_2 of patella located on edge between dorsal and internal surfaces. Positive optical reaction to UV light (365 and 395 nm).

Description of the female holotype (morphometric measurements after the description)

Coloration (in alcohol; pre-adult specimen). – Basically, yellowish to brownish yellow, weakly marked with brownish infuscations. Carapace brownish yellow, with weakly marked brownish spots. Tergites brownish yellow, marked with pale brownish confluent spots. Metasomal segments yellowish with pale brownish variegated spots. Telson pale yellow; aculeus reddish. Chelicerae pale yellow; fingers yellow with teeth reddish. Pedipalps yellowish with pale brownish pigmentation, more intense on femur than patella and chela; chela carinae and fingers reddish brown. Legs yellow to pale yellow. Sternites and genital operculum yellowish, pectines pale yellow. Positive optical reaction to UV light (365 and 395 nm).

Morphology. – Carapace narrowed anteriorly; anterior margin slightly concave; almost acarinated and weakly granulated; furrows shallow. Two pairs of lateral eyes and one pair of moderate median eyes, about one and half times the size of lateral eyes; median eyes anterior to the centre of the carapace with distance ratio from anterior and posterior margins of carapace 1:1.81. Tergites weakly granulated; carinae obsolete. Sternum pentagonal, longer than wide; genital operculum plates with a sub-oval shape. Pectinal tooth count 5-5. Sternites smooth; spiracles small and round-shaped; carinae absent from VII. Metasomal segments I-III wider than long; IV-V longer than wide; all carinae moderately to strongly granular; ventral carinae absent from segment I (others well developed), weakly marked on segment II; dorsal and latero-dorsal carinae with spinoid granules on segments I-IV; latero-ventral and ventral carinae on segment V composed of spinoid granules. Vesicle elongated with a pear-like shape, almost smooth and with a minute protuberance at the base of the aculeus; aculeus short and weakly curved. Pedipalps weakly elongated. Femur with five carinae. Patella with 6 vestigial carinae. Chela weakly enlarged and with 8 vestigial carinae. Tegument weakly granular. Fixed and movable fingers longer than manus, with 9 and 10 rows of granulations on the dentate margins, respectively. Chelicerae characteristic of the family Chaerilidae (Vachon, 1963). Trichobothriotaxy of type B; orthobothriotaxic (Vachon, 1974); femur with 9 trichobothria, patella with 14 and chela with 14; trichobothrium d_2 of patella located on edge between dorsal and internal surfaces. Legs with pedal spurs weakly developed. Tarsi with two rows of setae.

Morphometric values (mm)

- **Total length** (including telson), 24.79.
- **Carapace**
  length, 3.58;
  anterior width, 1.44;
  posterior width, 3.30.
- **Mesosoma**: 8.28.
- **Metasomal segments**
  I: length, 1.26; width, 2.09;
  II: length, 1.49; width, 1.72;
  III: length, 1.58; width, 1.63;
  IV: length, 1.67; width, 1.58;
  V: length, 3.12; width, 1.44; depth, 1.26.
- **Telson**: length, 3.81.
- **Vesicle**: width, 1.53; depth, 1.49.
- **Pedipalp**
  femur length, 2.56, width, 1.35;
  patella length, 2.84, width, 1.53;
  chela length, 5.49, width, 1.72, depth, 2.09;
  movable finger length, 2.79.

The female holotype is a pre-adult specimen measuring 24.79 mm. The estimated adult size is between 29-31 mm based on the theoretical morphometric growth factor for arthropod as defined by Dyar (1890) and Przibram & Megusar (1912) of 1.26, as well as recent studies showing morphometric growth factors going from 1.17 to 1.26 in females *Chaerilus* between pre-adult and adult instars (Lourenço *et al*. 2008; Kovařík *et al*. 2015).

Relationships. – The new species can be distinguished from the geographically closest *Chaerilus* species (Fig. 9), notably by the following main features:

- ***Chaerilus lehtrarensis*** Khatoon, 1999 (*nomen dubium*)

(**i**) larger size: no measurements are provided in original description but an extrapolation of the measured size of carapace illustration indicates an estimated size between 38-43 mm (estimated adult size 29-31 mm in the new species);

(**ii**) smaller pectinal tooth count with 3-3 to 3-4 teeth in female (5-5 in the new species);

(**iii**) chela with 7 vestigial carinae (8 in the new species). The original description of *C. lehtrarensis* also indicates metasomal segment I longer than wide (larger than long in the new species) but we express doubts about this statement.

- ***Chaerilus insignis*** Pocock, 1894

(**i**) larger size, up to 66 mm (estimated adult size 29-31 mm in the new species);

(**ii**) median eyes less anterior to the centre of the carapace with distance ratio from anterior and posterior margins of carapace 1:1.53 to 1:1.60 (1:1.81 in the new species);

(**iii**) chela movable finger shorter than manus (longer than manus in the new species).

- ***Chaerilus truncatus*** Karsch, 1879

(**i**) larger size with 52-68 mm (estimated adult size 29-31 mm in the new species);

(**ii**) smaller pectinal tooth count with 3-4 teeth in female (5-5 in the new species);

(**iii**) metasomal segment I often devoid of carinae or with only smooth carinae (well developed in the new species except ventral carinae which are absent);

(**iv**) chela movable finger shorter than manus (longer than manus in the new species).

- ***Chaerilus annapurna*** Lourenço & Duhem, 2010

(**i**) larger size with 49-55 mm (estimated adult size 29-31 mm in the new species);

(**ii**) smaller pectinal tooth count with 3-3 to 3-4 teeth in female (5-5 in the new species);

(**iii**) chela movable finger with 12-13 rows of granules on dentate margin (10 rows of granules in the new species).

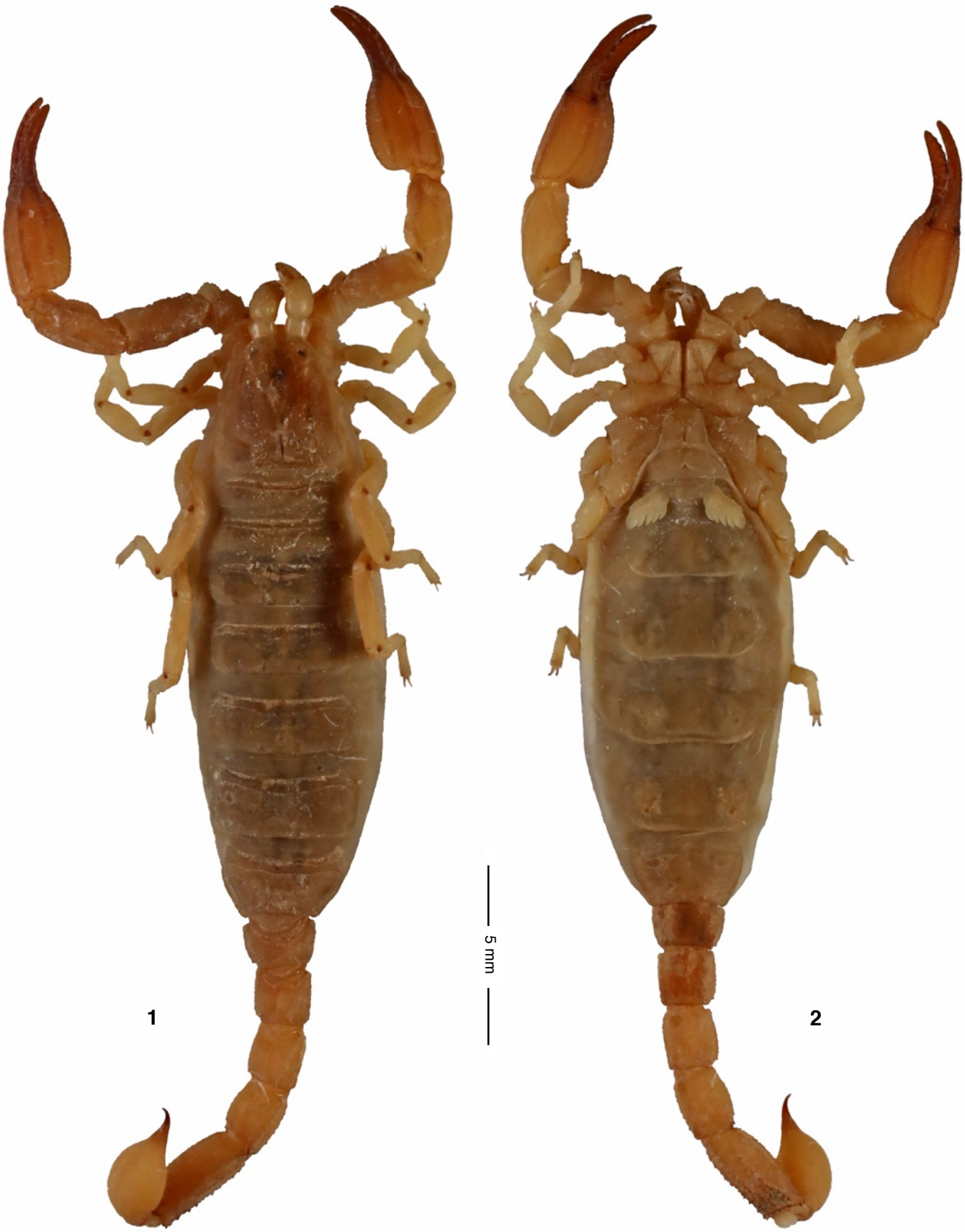

Fig. **1-2**. *Chaerilus pakistanus* **sp**. **n**., ♀ holotype, habitus. **1**. Dorsal aspect. **2**. Ventral aspect.

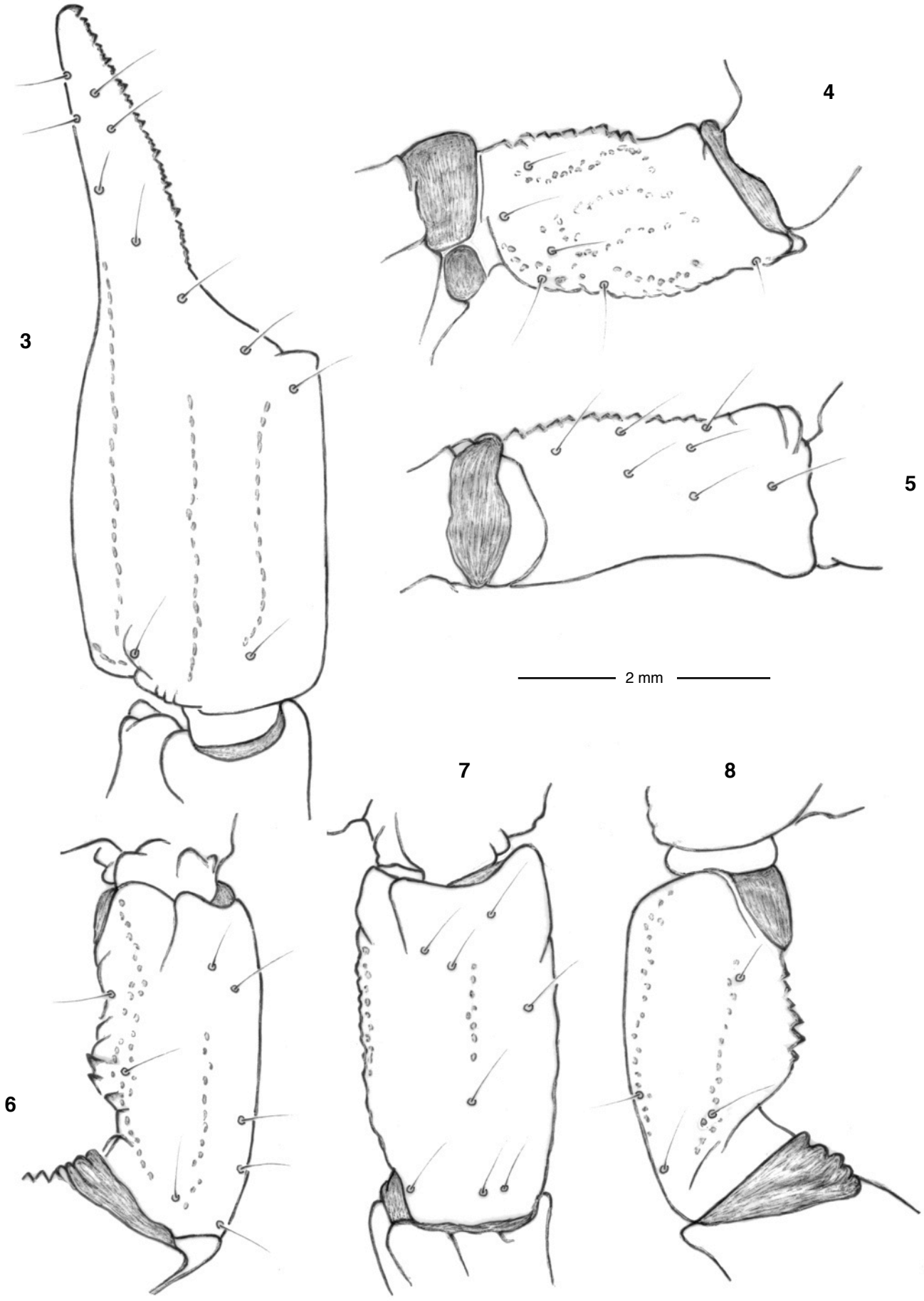

Fig. **3**-**8**. *Chaerilus pakistanus* **sp**. **n**., ♀ holotype, trichobotrial pattern.

3. Chela, dorso-external aspect. **4**-**5**. Femur, dorsal (**4**) and external (**5**) aspects. **6**-**8**. Patella, dorsal (**6**), external (**7**) and ventral (**8**) aspects.

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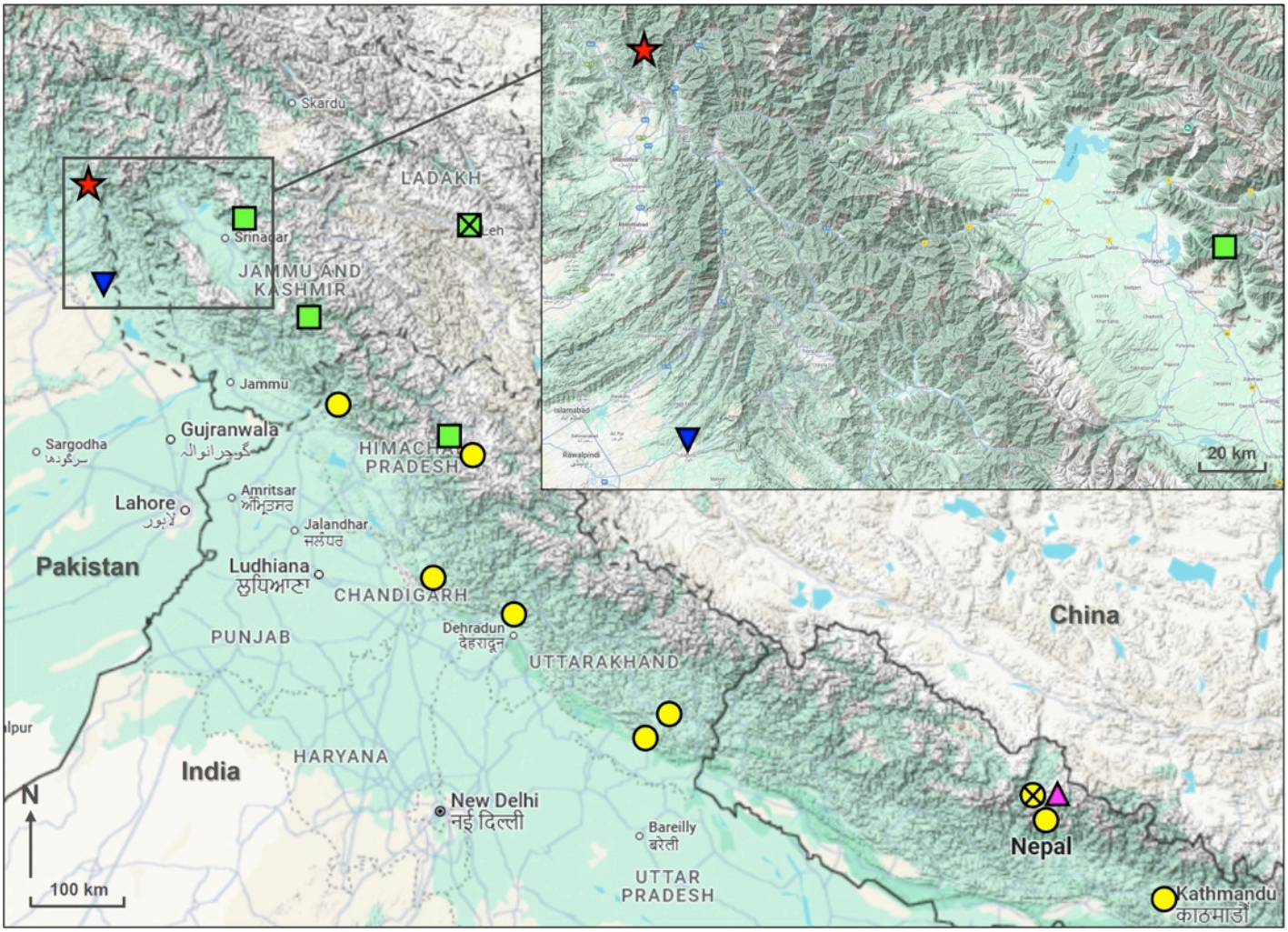

Fig. **9**. Map of the northern region of Pakistan, India and Nepal showing the approximate known distribution of the *Chaerilus* species occurring in the region.

● ***C. truncatus*** (type locality with cross) ■ ***C. insignis*** (type locality with cross) ▲ ***C. annapurna*** (type locality)

▼ ***C. lehtrarensis*** (type locality) ★ ***C. pakistanus* sp. n.**(type locality)

Authors contribution [1]
Publisher correspondence. – EY
Writing the article. – EY, WL
Description. – EY, WL
Article proofreading. – EY, WL
Bibliographic work. – EY, WL
Material study. – EY, WL
Author of the figures. – EY (Fig. 1-2, 9), WL (Fig. 3-8).

[1] **EY** = Ythier E. – **WL** = Lourenço W. R.

Résumé

Ythier E. & Lourenço W. R., 2025. – Une nouvelle espèce de *Chaerilus* Simon, 1877 du Pakistan (Scorpiones: Chaerilidae). *Faunitaxys*, 13(27): 1 – 6.

Une nouvelle espèce appartenant au genre *Chaerilus* Simon, 1877 est décrite du nord du Pakistan. Cette nouvelle espèce est comparée morphologiquement avec les espèces géographiquement proches présentes dans le nord du Pakistan, le nord de l'Inde et le Népal. Ce nouveau taxon représente la 60ème espèce de *Chaerilus* décrite à ce jour.

Mots-clés. – Scorpion, Chaerilidae, *Chaerilus*, morphologie, taxonomie, description, nouvelle espèce, Pakistan.

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Illustration de la couverture :

Kaghan valley, in the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province, northern Pakistan, near the type locality of *Chaerilus pakistanus* **sp**. **n**. (photo: Adeel ur Rehman Mughal / Wikipedia).

Crédits:

Eric Ythier : Fig. 1-2, 9.
Wilson R. Lourenço : Fig. 3-8.
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